

Black Hills Rapids Anti-Bullying and Zero Tolerance for Hazing Policy

Section 1: Purpose

The Black Hills Rapids is committed to providing players with a fun, positive, and secure environment in which to learn and enjoy the game of soccer. We do not tolerate bullying or hazing at any practice, game, or other BHR sanctioned event. We will promote a TELLING atmosphere. This means that anyone who knows that bullying or hazing is taking place is expected to report the incident. Players and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying or hazing is reported.

Section II: Definitions

i. Club: Refers to the Black Hills Rapids.

ii. Bullying: Bullying is defined as conduct, gestures, or comments which are insulting, intimidating, humiliating, hurtful, malicious, degrading, or otherwise offensive to a player, group of players, and/or teammates, and which create a hostile or intimidating environment, or which negatively affects a player's physical and/or emotional well-being. Bullying is any written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it is a single incident or a series of incidents that results in intentional pain and distress to the victim.

iii. Hazing: Hazing refers to any activity, behavior, or initiation ritual that subjects an individual or a group to physical, emotional, or psychological harm. Hazing includes any actions that compromise an individual's well-being, dignity, or safety and is prohibited under all circumstances.

iv. Reporting Party: The individual who reports an incident of bullying or hazing or participates in the investigation process.

v. Retaliation: Any adverse action taken against the reporting party in response to their reporting of bullying or hazing, or for participating in the investigation process.

Section III: Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate he or she is being bullied or hazed through various signs and symptoms. While some children are prone to report bullying or hazing to their parents, coaches, or adults, others will not, due to fear, intimidation, or other factors. Coaches and parents should be aware of possible signs indicating that bullying or hazing may be taking place. These signs and behaviors could indicate other problems, but bullying or hazing should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Section IV: Procedures for Parents, Coaches, and the Director of Coaching

Parents should report bullying or hazing incidents to the team coach or manager. If the problem persists, reach out to the Rapids Youth Soccer Director of Coaching or Board of Directors. If necessary and appropriate, police may be consulted.

In all cases of reported bullying or hazing, parents of the player who was targeted shall be informed immediately and may be asked to meet with the respective team coach and/or coaching director to discuss the incident. In all cases, strict confidentiality shall be maintained. It is not our goal to make a public example of reported incidents.

The negative behavior must be investigated, and the bullying or hazing stopped immediately. The parents of any player who is reported to be engaging in bullying or hazing will be contacted immediately by the respective team coach, coaching director, or BHR Board member and asked to meet to discuss the incident to help the individual or individuals change their behavior.

Section V: Consequences of Bullying and Hazing

In a first offense situation involving bullying or hazing, an attempt will be made to encourage the individual or individuals responsible to modify their behavior for their benefit, for the benefit of the person targeted, and for the team. An attempt will be made by the coach, manager, or parent(s) to reconcile the situation (age, level of maturity, and severity of offense must be considered).

If the bullying or hazing persists, disciplinary action against a player may be taken by the team coach and/or Director of Coaching, which may include, but is not limited to, immediate suspension from participation in practices or game(s) for a period of time.

After the incident/incidents have been investigated and addressed, the situation will continue to be monitored by the respective team coach, team manager, and players' parents to ensure the problem is resolved.

This policy is effective immediately and applies to all members of the Black Hills Rapids community. We are dedicated to maintaining a safe and respectful environment for everyone involved in our soccer club and appreciate your commitment to upholding these values.